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A green paper cutout of a person, possibly a young man, is pasted onto a light-colored, textured background. The cutout is positioned diagonally, with the person's head and shoulders visible. The person is wearing a t-shirt with a graphic design on the front. The background has a mottled, aged appearance with some darker green stains or marks.

Young People Facing Housing Deprivation in Palmerston North: A Crisis?

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NOVEMBER 2015



Cover & Inside Front Cover - Gayle Moana Johnson 2013

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Acknowledgements

Firstly, thank you to the young people that contributed to the surveys and research, for sharing your stories, and for connecting with us to present an honest account of your experiences.

Thank you to Mani Kingi and Gayle Moana Johnson for your generosity in sharing your art work, and allowing us to express the vision, resourcefulness and resilience of young people in our city.

Special thanks to Trissel Erikson **YOSS Youth One Stop Shop** for your guidance, encouragement and for inspiring us with your love for young people.

Thank you to the following people and organisations for their time, knowledge and support for the project: **The Palmy Youth Network**, **The Housing Needs Monitoring Group**, **MAIN (Manawatu Abuse Intervention Network)**, Deborah Loveridge and Jenny Johanson **Whakatipuria Teen Parent Unit**, Joanne Voice **Open Home Foundation**, Venessa Pokaia **Te Wakahuia a Manawatu Hauora**, Bruce Maden, Rebecca Conway and Julene Duerksen-Kapao **Te Aroha Noa Community Services**, Tessa Harrison **Best Care (Whakapai Hauora) Charitable Trust**, Christina Hemmingsen and Jannene Haydock **MASH Trust**, Debbie Baker, Keri Huurdeman, Alistair Bayley, Dave Mollard and Karlie Willis **YMCA Palmerston North**, Sarah Vaelua **YOSS** and **SALT**, Laurel Melbourne **START Youth Service**, Huatahi Nuku, Alan Dingley and Keisha Dais **Youth Space**, Toroa Pohatu **Te Roopu Whakaruruhau o nga Wahine**, Danielle Berry **Palmerston North Women's Refuge**, Sandi Noon **Camillia House**, Kevin Richards **Salvation Army**, Shane Kennard and Daryll Collins **Salvation Army Men's Hostel**, Lew Findlay and Sheree Gilsenan **Shepherds Rest**, Katrina Pereka, Meriam Findlay, Kalwyn Pereka, Rachel Dougherty, Jason Clark and John Philips **Palmerston North Street Van**, Carol Arnold, Sue Swinborne and Sally Babbage **Housing Advice Centre**, Kevin Reilly and Daniel Ryland **Manawatu Tenants Union**, Pauline Karim and Kerry Howe **MUSA (Massey University Student Association)**, Andrew Mitchell **Church on Vogel**, Rachel Meacheam and Elizabeth Corbett **Lifeshouse Trust**, Kate Sawyer **Central Baptist Church**, Debbie Harris **CCC (Christian Community Church)**, Donna Grant **Crossroads Church**, Sandra Owen **PARS (Prisoner's Aid & Rehabilitation Society)**, Norelle Ward **VRC (Volunteer Resource Centre)**, Jenny Pepworth **Red Cross Refuge Services**, Ray Jermyn **Manline**, Peter Grey, Alane Nilsen, Todd Taiepa and Julie McDonald **PNCC (Palmerston North City Council)**, Susan Baty **PNCC City Counsellor for Housing**, **The Palmerston North Youth Council**, Nikki Kook, Linda Oatley-Watkins, Liz Walker and Jennifer Hamilton **Child Youth and Family**, Sergeant Craig Smith **New Zealand Police**, Keith Hilson **Housing New Zealand**, Nathan Cross **DIA (Department of Internal Affairs)**, Iain Lees-Galloway **Member of Parliament Palmerston North – Electorate Office**, Jono Naylor **List MP National**, Darroch Ball – **List MP New Zealand First**, Fraser Greig **Access Manawatu/PNCSC (Palmerston North Community Services Council)**, Carol Whitley and Craig Viles (Graphic Design).

Thank you with admiration and respect to Dr. Kathryn Hay and Helen Simmons, **(Massey University)** for imparting your wisdom and love of social work.

Thank you to Michelle Thompson, Michelle MacManus and Rochelle Ross **PNCSC (Palmerston North Community Services Council)** for welcoming us into your organisation and guiding us through this process.

Finally, thank you to our families for your support and love.

Executive Summary

If you are a young person tonight, or any other night, living in Palmerston North, you will need to hope that you have somewhere to sleep, as currently the city provides no safe and secure emergency housing for young people. If, for a range of reasons, a young person is not able to, or chooses not to stay with their immediate or extended family, the social services in the city are forced to ask that young person to consider sleeping on friends' couches or to seek other equally inadequate housing options in the absence of a service that could meet their housing needs.

Our 'Young People Facing Housing Deprivation in Palmerston North: A Crisis?' research resulted from the annual Social Wellbeing Forum hosted by the Palmerston North Community Services Council in April 2015. A range of social issues were identified as having a significant impact on the wellbeing of a number of clients that sought the services of the numerous agencies in attendance at the forum, including:

- Housing, short-term and emergency accommodation
- Alcohol, substance abuse, domestic violence, and sexual abuse, social isolation, stigma and discrimination, vulnerable communities, health and wellbeing
- Income security and employment,
- Inadequate funding and challenging working environments for providers
- Access to public transport
- Education and training opportunities

Several non-government organisations within the community sector attended the forum along with representatives of the Palmerston North City Council and local Members of Parliament to discuss and prioritise these recurrent social issues. Housing was identified at the forum to be the issue that we, as Massey University Social Work students, would seek to address.

The Member of Parliament for Palmerston North, Iain Lees-Galloway, addressed the housing issue in Palmerston North by stating that 'housing, as we all know, is becoming an acute issue'...'it comes down to one word, insecurity...we, as organisations, have to work a lot harder at supporting and working for people to give them hope and opportunities for the future'.

The purpose of the 'Young People Facing Housing Deprivation in Palmerston North: A Crisis?' report is to research the extent of the housing insecurity and homelessness issue for young people in Palmerston North with a particular focus on their short term and emergency accommodation needs. Attendees at the Social Wellbeing Forum 2015 identified the following summary of issues for housing:

- The need to map issues and providers, and investigate alternatives
- Gather and collate information
- Quality of housing to be addressed
- Community needs to be looked at
- Criteria for the housing list
- Look at existing infrastructure with an "ideal" in one referenced document

Methodology

We started the project with a strengths based project plan based on Te Whare Tapa Model of health, that included a mixed methods approach within a youth development framework.

In the first phase of the research we conducted a stakeholder analysis using semi-structured interviews with 32 social service providers in Palmerston North, including services with a primary interest in service delivery for young people, alternative education providers, housing providers, networking groups

and churches in Palmerston North. We expanded the interview process to include interviews with representatives of the City Council, City Councillors, and Members of Parliament to provide a wider political context to the issue.

During the second phase of the research we conducted 45 surveys and interviews adapted from the 'Palmy Youth Network' survey with young people engaged in alternative education with 5 alternative education providers. These surveys were conducted adhering to the FAIR ethics framework (Fairness, Autonomy, Integrity, Results, Rowson, 2006), the ANZASW Code of Ethics and the SWRB Code of Conduct (with particular consideration to informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality).

During the third phase of the research we conducted semi-structured interviews with Child, Youth and Family (CYF), Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC), the New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

The fourth phase of the research included a review of current academic research and an integration of policy, with a particular focus on research relating to housing insecurity and young people in Palmerston North and in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Recommendations

1. Establish a Unified Housing Framework for Young People

- "One size fits all" is not going to work for everyone, which is why a framework addressing youth housing needs is required, with differing levels of support for young individuals within a youth development framework that recognises the value of young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2. Government Funding Changes Required

- Government funding changes are required in order to address resource deficiencies for social service providers.
- Community organisations are working in contract compliant silos which have been seen to impact on individual's needs and experiences within the social sector.
- There is an urgent need to address the issue of housing deprivation being an outcome of wider systemic failures.

3. Social Services Collaboration

- Collaboration is needed in order to fully fulfil the needs of young people, requiring the support of central government agencies in Palmerston North, local government, social services, schools, Rangitane as mana whenua, and iwi.
- A holistic collaborative model of care and support is needed to provide a wrap-around service to young individuals who require housing within a timeframe where the young person is still open to receiving support.

4. Establish an Emergency 24 hour Shelter for Young People (see attached model)

- Establishment of a 5-6 bedroom 24 hour emergency supported accommodation for young people with social work and youth work support.
- One bedroom set aside for crisis accommodation.
- Supported life skills and values critical to maintaining wellbeing to prepare young people for adulthood and independence.

5. Establish Transitional Accommodation for Young People

- We recommend an additional 5-6 bedroom transitional housing, for young people that need housing in a semi-independent environment.
- For young people who require some advocacy support, to live independently in an environment that allows them to develop their life skills and transition into full independence.

³ Social Wellbeing Forum Report 2015. Palmerston North. MP Address Iain Lees-Galloway MP for Palmerston North – Labour. Appendix V. p. 22.

⁴ Social Wellbeing Forum Report 2015. Palmerston North. p. 8.

6. Re-establishing Relationships

- Re-establishment of healthy, supportive and positive relationships with parents, whanau and support networks where a breakdown in the relationship may have occurred through counselling and advocacy services within the housing initiative.
- A breakdown in whanau relationships is cause for a high number of young people facing housing deprivation. We recommend the use of the Whanau Hui approach for the development of a strong cultural identity and a sense of belonging and to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

7. Establish more Accessible Housing for Young People Wanting to Live Independently in the Wider Community

- It is recommended that more accessible housing to young people who are wanting to live independently within the community is available for the age group of young people who are unable to sign tenancy agreements.
- A 'Friendly Landlord' scheme is given more development and funding
- It is critical to address the age discrimination young people in Palmerston North experience when seeking social housing and private rental accommodation.

8. We advocate the establishment of an 'Advisory Group

- Using the conceptual framework (discussed by Joanne Voice of the Open Home Foundation, at the Palmy Youth Network) where relevant professional representatives of agencies, for example: the services of health, mental health, housing, justice, education, alcohol and drug addiction, the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Internal Affairs, will meet with young people and their advocates to provide regular advice, support, services and information.



Mani Kingi 2013

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to conduct a needs assessment and analysis of the scope of youth homelessness in Palmerston North by mapping the existing service providers and conducting an analysis of gaps in emergency housing provision. We were tasked with using the PNCSC Social Wellbeing Forum action points to map the issue and report our findings. We conducted the study from within a strengths based perspective, as it was important to our research that we acknowledge the resilience and dignity of the young people that we interviewed.

Te Whare Tapa Wha Model of Health

A central focus of the study was to utilise the principles of Sir Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model of health as a way to establish a bi-cultural framework, to acknowledge the existing historical advantages and disadvantages between certain groups in society. We wanted to acknowledge our own worldviews, to understand how those worldviews may filter our perceptions of others within the study. Te Whare Tapa Wha as a holistic integrated approach to wellbeing, encompassing: Te Taha Hinengaro, Te Taha Wairua, Te Taha Tinana, Te Taha Whanau (Durie, 1994).

Youth Development Framework

In hindsight, we would have adopted a youth development framework from the outset of the study. It was only through our interviews with key social services that we become aware of the central importance of using a youth development strategy.

A youth development approach encompasses the following six principles:

1. The 'big picture' focus is key to youth development. How political structures, social and cultural systems, national and international laws on the rights of young people, economic contexts and the Treaty of Waitangi, all impact on young people.
2. Youth development is about young people being connected to the community, family, whanau, education, peers, and to positive influences.
3. Youth development is based on a consistent strengths-based approach, by looking at what enhances the protective factors and what contributes to the risk factors.
4. Quality healthy relationships are vital to youth development. It is important that young people feel supported in the community.
5. Youth participation is key to developing opportunities for young people. They need to have a say in the decisions that are made for them and what happens to them.
6. Research about and for young people is crucial to establishing what is needed for the future. Youth development requires quality information and a future focus.

Munford and Walsh-Tapiata state that the 'first priority of the community development process is the empowering and enabling of those who are traditionally deprived of power and control over their common affairs (Munford and Walsh-Tapiata, 2001). Marginalised populations (such as young people) have historically been disadvantaged in terms of access to resources and decision-making processes. Young people should be empowered to make decisions for their own wellbeing. It is key to any further work on this issue to involve young people in the process.

Use of Reflective Practice

We discussed throughout the study the potential for the project to be influenced by our personal values, biases, cultural beliefs and practices, but also by our own political ideologies. We used external supervision to address those concerns and seek perspective on our points of view. We believe that there were both positive and negative impacts on the research, of both our inexperience in research and report writing, and of working with young people. The positive impacts on the research were that we were able to approach the study initially using a naive enquiry approach, and as such had no preconceived notions as to the extent of the issue. The negative impacts on the research were that had we been more aware of the context of working with young people, we would have used a youth development framework from the outset. We would have sought more consultation with young people as to the basis and direction of the study, to seek a youth partnership rather than participation in the research as survey participants.

Ethical Framework

There were several ethical considerations throughout the research process. We addressed the ethics by adhering to the PNCSC Code of Conduct, the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) Code of Ethics, and the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) Code of Conduct. At all stages throughout the study we maintained high levels of integrity and respect towards participants and were mindful of the vulnerability of young people with housing issues (so as to not cause further distress or trauma).

1. **Informed consent:**

Massey University gave permission only for young people over the age of 16 to participate in the survey due to concerns about parental consent and maintaining mindfulness of the vulnerability of survey participants.

2. **Maintaining confidentiality:**

All information gathered from young people maintained their anonymity. No information gathered is either identifiable to the individual, or identifiable to the social service they are engaged with, or how we came to meet them (which led to their participation in the study).

3. **Voluntary participation:**

All participants were supported towards self determination and made aware that they were under no obligation to participate in the study. We discussed with all participants for what purpose the information would be used and their ability to withdraw their consent at any time.

4. **What to leave in and out:**

In the report writing process, situations arose where we had to consider the implications of making remarks that were a direct commentary on the perceptions of some social services as to the direct quality of service provision of another service. In those instances we left those remarks out of the final document.

5. **Determining ethical outcomes:**

We became aware throughout the course of the research, of the potential to present a particular picture of need by what we included and what we left out and by attributing meaning to the facts to conclude answers. The data though, despite the short timeframe speaks for itself. We attempted always to present an honest account of our findings, but acknowledge the limited timeframe to fully investigate the issue and the danger of overstating the issue by not having the full statistical picture.

Interview Strategy (as discussed in the Executive Summary)

Phase One

Semi structured interviews were conducted with 32 social service providers in Palmerston North. Additional interviews were conducted with representatives of the City Council, City Councillors and Members of Parliament. The questionnaire was written to incorporate the key questions arising from the PNCSC *Social Wellbeing Forum* and to give a framework for the direction of the study. These interviews were conducted alongside our review of research that had been conducted in Palmerston North, and were open-ended questions designed to prompt discussion. Not all questions were asked of all services, as in some instances, questions were not applicable to that particular service. Most interviews were from 1 to 1 1/2 hours in duration.

Phase Two

45 surveys and interviews adapted from the 'Palmy Youth Network' survey were conducted with young people engaged in alternative education and with other young people that we came into contact with by referral. We would like to note the following points:

- Given extended time frames we would have liked to have interviewed more young people exiting state care.
- It was evident and can be seen in our data that we were unable to get as wide of an intake in participants as first hoped due to the transience of youth as a culture.
- The limitations of a manual survey.
- We would like to acknowledge the flaws in our adaptation of the survey questionnaire due to time constraints. Some of the questions were ambiguous, and we ended up conducting semi-structured interviews with most participants to seek clarity and to investigate their circumstances further.

Phase Three

Semi-structured interviews with Child, Youth and Family (CYF), Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC), the New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Again, due to time constraints, we were unable to research more into the impacts on young people in Palmerston North and on government policy, to present those findings in the report, in particular to address the structural causes of youth homelessness.

Phase Four

The fourth phase of the research included a review of current academic research and an integration of policy, with a particular focus on research relating to housing insecurity and young people in Palmerston North and in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Mani Kingi 2013

Defining Homelessness, Housing Deprivation and Young People

How issues are defined and the ways in which those definitions are used can have a considerable impact on how social services are developed to address those issues. The definitions of homelessness, housing deprivation and youth or young people in New Zealand are consistent with international trends.

1. Statistics New Zealand Definition:

A working group, comprised of Statistics New Zealand, Housing New Zealand Corporation and the Ministry of Social Development, developed the New Zealand official definition of homelessness in 2008. This definition established four categories of homelessness which include:

1. **Without Shelter:** Living situations that provide no shelter, or makeshift shelter, are considered as without shelter. These include living situations such as living on the street and inhabiting improvised dwellings, such as living in a shack or a car.
2. **Temporary Accommodation:** Living situations are considered temporary accommodation when they provide shelter overnight, or when 24-hour accommodation is provided in a non-private dwelling, and are not intended to be lived in long-term. This includes hostels for the homeless, transitional supported accommodation for the homeless, and women's refuges. Also, people staying long-term in motor camps and boarding houses, as these are not intended for long-term accommodation.
3. **Sharing Accommodation:** Living situations that provide temporary accommodation for people through sharing someone else's private dwelling. The usual residents of the dwelling are not considered homeless.
4. **Uninhabitable Housing:** Living situations where people reside in a dilapidated dwelling are considered uninhabitable housing.

(Statistics New Zealand, 2009)

Significant for this study on the prevalence of homelessness for young people in Palmerston North, was the clarification by the Statistics New Zealand study of what housing situations were excluded and included in the definition. In particular, minors that move between different living situations such as between temporary accommodation, sharing in a household that is not their usual accommodation and sleeping rough are included in the homeless definition. Young people who may at times stay with family members, are on a social housing waiting list, or who have had a recent stable residency but who have had to leave that residence due to insecurity from family violence or abuse are also included in the definition due to the unstable and insecure nature of the housing. (Statistics New Zealand, 2009).

2. New Zealand Parliamentary Library Research Paper:

The 2014 Parliamentary Library Research Paper 'Homelessness in New Zealand' reiterated the Statistics New Zealand definition, officially defined as 'having no options to acquire safe and secure housing' (New Zealand Parliamentary Library, 2014). The research additionally raised the issue of 'concealed homelessness', which has been illustrated throughout our study, pointing to the prevalence in Palmerston North of couch surfing and overcrowding as the central issue to housing insecurity and instability. The Parliamentary Library Research Paper highlights the study of Edgar and Meert (2006) who discussed the rise of housing insecurity occurring when people have no options for their own permanent home but rely on the option of sharing someone else's accommodation on a temporary

basis, therefore having no stability or legal tenure and rights. Further implications of this type of unstable accommodation is believed to have broad reaching implications for social development, in that the young person living within an overcrowded or couch surfing situation has no privacy or space. What would normally constitute their private domain (their bedroom) is within the public domain (the lounge). The study importantly identified young people exiting state care (at age 17 in New Zealand) and moving from their existing state caregiver as not being considered homeless by the study, but as a vulnerable group who may be 'at risk of homelessness' (New Zealand Parliamentary Research Paper, 2014).

3. Chamberlain and MacKenzie Definition of Homelessness – Australia

Another study central to the relevance in defining particular forms of homelessness and the ways in which definitions impact on the perceptions of what is, or is not considered homelessness, is the Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1992 study that identified four categories of homelessness: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Marginal homelessness. Richards (2008) discusses Chamberlain and MacKenzie's study of homelessness in Australia, and relates it to the homelessness experience in Aotearoa New Zealand. The four categories are as follows:

1. **Primary Homelessness:** is defined as rough sleepers (using parks, the street, cars, derelict buildings, makeshift shelter)
2. **Secondary Homelessness:** includes people who are transient between forms of temporary shelter (family, friends, hostels, night shelters)
3. **Tertiary Homelessness:** includes people in housing which is unsuitable for their needs and has no security of tenure (including boarding houses)
4. **Marginal Homelessness:** includes people in housing which is physically unsuitable (overcrowded, substandard).

This definition of homelessness is key to our study as it is inclusive of the areas of homelessness and housing deprivation of young people in Palmerston North. The varied experiences of young people can be identified as falling within any one of the above four categories. There were many indications of young people in Palmerston North who fit within the homelessness categories from Chamberlain and MacKenzie's study of Secondary, Tertiary and Marginal homelessness. We would advocate for a development of the Statistics New Zealand definition of homelessness to be more inclusive of the broad experiences of housing deprivation in New Zealand.

4. Housing Insecurity Definition:

Housing insecurity is a more difficult issue to define conclusively. Housing insecurity is referenced in the Statistics New Zealand definition (as stated above, particularly with reference to temporary accommodation and shared accommodation). The key rationale for this report is to investigate the types of housing issues experienced by young people in Palmerston North. Some of the types of accommodation that have been identified as being sought by or experienced by young people facing housing deprivation or insecurity include:

Emergency accommodation (for which their age makes them ineligible), Women's Refuge (for which their age makes them ineligible), boarding houses/hostels, caravan/motor park, camping grounds, maraes, motels/backpackers, garages/sleep outs, sleeping rough outside, police cells, couch surfing, overcrowding (living in houses that may have an excess of occupants for the number of bedrooms and size of house with limited amenities for occupants, breaking into vacant buildings, sleeping in a car.

Findings from our interviews with young people have shown contributing factors resulting in them experiencing housing insecurity issues include: family breakdowns in which young people have been asked to leave, have chosen to leave, or where external concerns for the wellbeing of young people (for example a history of engagement with Child, Youth and Family) have resulted in young people leaving

the family home, a breakdown in extended family relationships (where young people have found a long term living arrangement with extended family untenable), family violence and abuse, income instability, benefit dependence (with the cost of rent and living costs exceeding income), overcrowded housing environments and reliance on finding temporary accommodation with friends and acquaintances (couch surfing).

5. United Nations Definition of Youth:

In 1981 the United Nations adopted a definition of youth for the purposes of gathering statistical data. 'Youth' or 'young people' are terms used interchangeably by the United Nations and are defined as an age cohort of 15-24 years old. Beyond the biological process of maturing from childhood to adulthood through adolescence, this 'youth' period of time is also a time of social transition from childhood (the formative stage of development dependent on guardianship and guidance) to one of adulthood (transitioning through to a stage of independence and autonomy).

The meaning of the word 'youth' or 'young person' is understood in different ways within different cultures. The expression is a form of socially constructed terminology that refers to a transitional time in development of self-identity formation, where the influence of peers and other external factors gain greater influence over decision making processes. The definition of youth is based on considerably more than chronological age, but on the ways in which young people engage with youth culture, and experience youth issues (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014).

For the scope of our research we chose to adopt the United Nations definition of youth, but acknowledge that there emerged a particular emphasis within the course of the research (interviewing social services who engage with young people, and the surveys of young people experiencing housing insecurity), on the 16-18 year age group as a cause for particular concern. Factors necessitating the focus of this age groups was evidenced by the following issues facing some young people:

1. The ending of formal education and the emergence of the NEET indicator age group (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)
2. Young people exiting state care at the age of 17 years old
3. Young people on youth payments or young parent payments (with payment cards) struggling financially
4. Young people under the age of 18 who were unsupported by their parents but too young to receive studylink student allowances
5. Young people under the age of 18 unable to automatically sign Tenancy Agreements without going through the Tenancy Tribunal or being aware of their tenancy rights, and facing age based discrimination when seeking private rental housing

6. Tangata Whenua Definition of Young People (Rangatahi):

A semi-structured interview with Whakapai Hauora established for us the need to define young Maori as Rangatahi. Rangatahi within a Maori worldview are defined as youth or a younger generation. Whakapai Hauora encouraged us to consider the concept of the term of Rangatahi as being determined by personal life experiences and maturity, a holistic approach to development that encompasses more than chronological age. Rangatahi was identified by Whakapai Hauora as being between the ages of 12 and up until late 20's/early 30's in some cases. The concept is based on a Maori worldview, defining life experiences in the following categories:

1. Tamariki ("Child")
2. Rangatahi ("Youth")
3. Pakeke ("Adult")
4. Kaumatua ("Elder")

Key Research and Policy

Impacts on Housing Insecurity for Young People in Palmerston North

Aging Out of State Care – Child, Youth and Family

Deborah Yates wrote in 2001 of the significant issues facing young people in state care in Aotearoa New Zealand when being discharged at the age of 17, in *Sink or Swim: Leaving Care in New Zealand*. Given a longer timeframe for our report we would have liked to have spent more time researching the impact of this policy on young people experiencing housing deprivation in Palmerston North. Yates suggested that these young people nationwide are ‘a very small and hidden population, and very little is known about the long-term outcomes for them’ (Yates, 2001).

Child, Youth and Family in Palmerston North work with their young people in state care, from the age of 15 years old, to transition them to independence on their 17th birthday. They have a range of initiatives to support that transition, including the Passport to Independence written by Linda Oatley-Watkins. The young people that we spoke with, who had themselves experienced the transition or knew someone who had, suggested that trying to manage on their own (after having often been placed in many foster homes over the duration of their care) was very difficult. The research of Yates (2001) suggested that ‘by the age of 16 or 17, young people are unlikely to be ready to manage their own finances, relationships, education and difficulties without family or family-like support.

Signing a Tenancy Agreement

Tied to the gap that arose for young people experiencing the ‘aging-out’ of state care at the age of 17, is the difficulty for young people in signing Tenancy Agreements under the age of 18, and needing a Guarantor. Many young people stated that they faced discrimination by landlords and property rental companies (particularly if they were under 18 years old) and addressed the need for the Tenancy Tribunal to get young people ratified. Young people must exhaust all other options to be eligible for social housing, with their eligibility often impacted by criminal history, credit history, lack of good references and lack of employment.

Central and Local Government

There is currently no policy framework that addresses homelessness on a central government level, despite the need for a prevention and early intervention strategy that would impact on outcomes for young people, and save the government on significant financial expenditure that attempt to address the outcomes of issues such as homelessness on areas such as health care and benefit dependency.

There is currently no local government strategy to address homelessness in Palmerston North for young people, despite an overwhelming majority of social services stating the urgent need to address the issue in the city.

Welfare Reforms – Productivity Commission Report – 29 April 2015

Bill English, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand and Minister of Finance was asked during a parliamentary debate on the findings of the Productivity Commission’s report on welfare reforms whether the Government faces incentives to underfund contracts with NGO’s for the delivery of social services, with adverse consequence for service provision. To which he replied that “the government often does deliberately, as a result of Government policy, actually pay less than the full cost of services, and often the users of those services need a higher level of more sophisticated service than what we currently offer them”.

Scoping Report on Supported Accommodation Services for Young Adults in the MidCentral Region (2009)

The Scoping Report on Supported Accommodation Services for Young Adults in the Midcentral Region prepared for the Mid Central District Health Board in 2009, was specifically targeted towards the supported accommodation needs of young adults (18-25 years) with mental health and addiction needs, and identified gaps in supported accommodation services in the Midcentral region. The report made recommendations that included the need for short term housing for young people with the collaborative engagement of support services, to work with young people with mental health and addiction needs and their whanau. The report stated that ‘there is no age appropriate short term housing options for young people’ (Katene, 2009). While this report was focussed specifically around the needs of a target group of young people, the recommendations from the report align with what our research has shown across the spectrum of young people with housing issues in Palmerston North. Namely, the issues arising from family circumstances, a lack of basic personal and practical living skills, and an issue with social connectedness to live independently in the community.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)

According to the United Nations, homelessness is an issue of human rights. Children and young people have a fundamental right to the same basic human rights as adults, and additionally, children and young people have increased rights due to their vulnerability and the need for additional protection from exploitation and abuse.

Children under the age of 18 years old are covered under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC). These rights include the basic rights to adequate education, health care, access to social services, an adequate standard of living, and the basic necessities of life, food and adequate housing.

During the public consultation period for New Zealand’s Fifth Periodic Report for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) from December 2014 to February 2015, it was acknowledged (through consultation with social services), that five years later, child poverty was still of significant issue in New Zealand, with housing for children being of key importance to their wellbeing. The Report also acknowledged the inconsistencies in the definition of ‘child’ through the use of different ages in different statutes (for example: the age of consent 16 years old, the age to drive 16 years old, the age of exit from state care 17 years old, the age of eligibility to enrol to vote 18 years old) (Office of the Children’s Commissioner, 2010).

“There is an immediate need to get kids off the streets” (Alane Nilsen PNCC)

Findings from Interviews

Social Services, Alternative Education Providers, Churches and Members of Parliament

1. **93.75% of social services interviewed for the study indicated that there is an identifiable need for emergency housing provision in the city of Palmerston North for young people.**
2. The same number of social services indicated that for young people with housing insecurity, **there is a need to address not only the immediate housing issue, but to address the holistic causes of housing insecurity.** Housing insecurity is an outcome of a range of complex situations/needs.
3. A small but significant number of services interviewed indicated that they were aware of **cases of young people being taken home within the service (when it was not their policy to do so) simply as a solution at that time,** for that person in crisis, in the absence of adequate emergency housing for young people.
4. **Housing overcrowding is a large problem for young people in Palmerston North.** There are many cases of young people who are engaged with social services and alternative education, living in overcrowded living conditions.
5. **Many services are working in silos,** and although there is collaborative engagement between services, more needs to be done to address the housing needs of young people:

“Why is more collaboration not happening? – [there are] so many different philosophies from all different services on what they see needs to be done....there is a moral aspect...a different ethos”.

“Things need to change, every service seems to be working as silos. We are struggling to meet the increasing demand for services on our limited resources”.
6. **Several services suggested that there is some referral to accommodation providers that they believe are not appropriate housing solutions for young people and in some cases, are detrimental to their wellbeing.** These referrals are made through the need to refer them to somewhere, although in the knowledge that these places are unsuitable for young people to be living.
7. **Every social service indicated that a lack of resources and funding impacts on their service delivery for young people.**

“Social services are contract compliant – they need to change the system to be more responsive to the people that need it”.
8. **There is a real need to review the entire support system for young people.**
9. **There is an additional need to address the requirement of a wrap around service that addresses life skill development.**

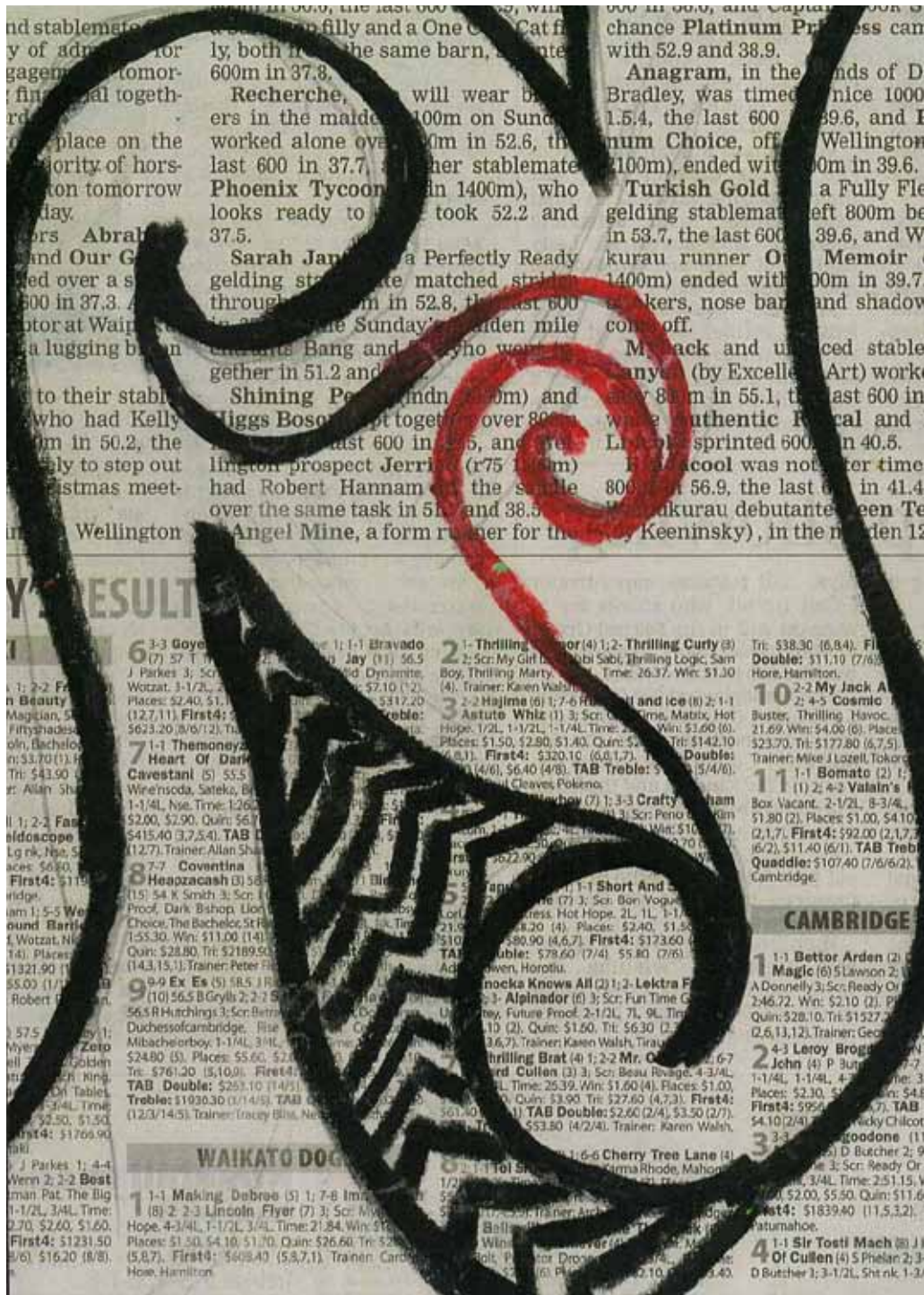
“Having a house is the basis but where and what is the rest? – How can they continue looking after themselves?”

10. There is seen to be an escalation of the following **contributing risk factors** for young people who experience housing insecurity:
- ♦ The experience for young people of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse
 - ♦ The role of substance abuse
 - ♦ The role of mental health issues both for young people and for their family
 - ♦ The risk of offending with crimes of poverty and disengagement (theft, assault)
 - ♦ Intergenerational issues and a lack of positive role modelling
 - ♦ Little or no engagement in education, employment or training
 - ♦ Disengagement from community, with no sense of belonging
 - ♦ A breakdown in family relationships leading to young people requiring housing
11. The impact of **housing deprivation of young people influences all other areas of their lives:**
- “education, training, careers, jobs, finance, opportunities, relationships”.... “the basis on which most people build their lives”.
12. Most social services discussed the issue of **youth homelessness as being hidden.**
- “There is not a well known need for youth emergency and/or transitional housing as youth do not present with homelessness to services as a problem”.*
- “When young people ask for help for things like housing it is often at the end of a long list of things that have led them to this point”.*
13. Identified **Barriers to Accessing Housing:**
- ♦ Age discrimination – particularly from property managers and rental agencies
 - ♦ Discrimination for being young parents
 - ♦ Criminal convictions
 - ♦ Poor credit history
 - ♦ Lack of references
 - ♦ Unaffordability of rent
 - ♦ Economic insecurity (lack of employment/benefit dependence)
 - ♦ Mental health and physical/wellbeing
 - ♦ Intergenerational lack of lifeskills
14. **Importance of engaging young people in the wider community through volunteering,** the benefits include:
- ♦ Being connected and engaged
 - ♦ Building networks in the community
 - ♦ Knowing where to ask for help
 - ♦ Using volunteering in the community as a building block for future employment, training and education
- “Young people need to feel a part of something bigger than themselves, a sense of belonging of giving and receiving”.*
15. There are **long term implications of not addressing the housing insecurity of young people in Palmerston North.**

“If you are a young person that can’t get help for different reasons then you become an adult with the same issues”

(Darroch Ball, Member of Parliament, NZ First)

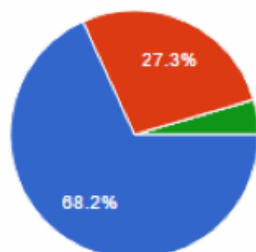
16



Findings of Youth Survey

Young People who are Experiencing Difficulty with their Housing and not in Supported Stable Accommodation

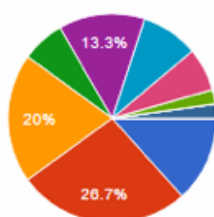
Gender



Female	30	68.2%
Male	12	27.3%
Gender Diverse	0	0%
Other	2	4.5%

Of the 45 young people that participated in the 'Young People who are Experiencing Difficulty with their Housing and not in Supported Stable Accommodation' survey, 66.2% of participants identified as female. While most social services acknowledged the prevalence of housing deprivation for young men, this study is heavily influenced by the gender demographic engaged in the alternative education programmes that we visited

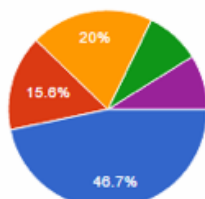
Age



16	6	13.3%
17	12	26.7%
18	9	20%
19	3	6.7%
20	6	13.3%
21	4	8.9%
22	3	6.7%
23	1	2.2%
24	0	0%
25	1	2.2%
0	0	0%

From the participants that took part in the survey it was clear to see that there is a gap in the housing support for young people aged in the 17 year age bracket, this may be due to our surveys being completed in alternative education programmes. However, it has also been evident in talking with survey participants, that housing deprivation in this age group may be linked to the state discharge age. It is also evident here that under the age of 20, there is a much higher percentage of young people facing housing needs and deprivation in comparison to the 15 participants aged 20 years old and above.

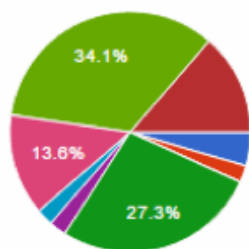
Ethnicity



New Zealand Maori	21	46.7%
New Zealand European	7	15.6%
New Zealander	9	20%
New Zealand Maori/New Zealand European	4	8.9%
Other	4	8.9%

This chart reflects an over-representation of rangatahi who are experiencing housing deprivation in Palmerston North. It is important to acknowledge the different ways in which people identify their ethnicity and the influence of that representation on statistical data.

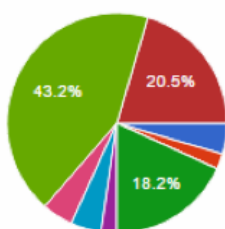
Where did you sleep last night?



Mums	2	4.5%
Dads	1	2.3%
Parents home	0	0%
Whanau	12	27.3%
Housing NZ home	1	2.3%
With partner/spouse	1	2.3%
Friends	6	13.6%
My house	15	34.1%
Other	6	13.6%

This chart represents a high number of young people that have acquired and stayed in their own home in some form of way, this may be through rental properties, flatting with friends, boarding, Housing New Zealand homes, or claiming family homes as their own. There is also evidence suggesting a high number of young people living with whanau rather than their parents' home, 27.3% of the participants that took part in our survey had stayed at a member of whanau the night before we spoke with them

Where do you usually Sleep?



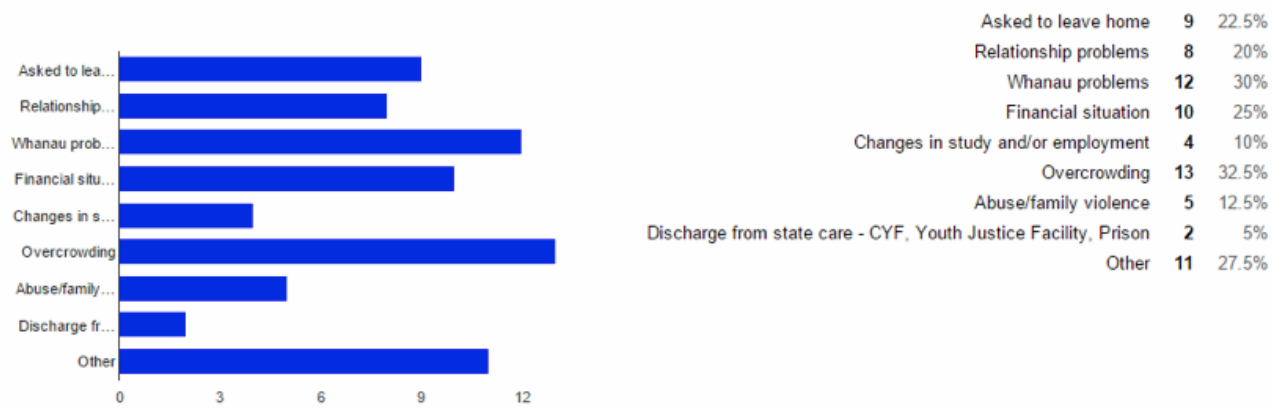
Mums	2	4.5%
Dads	1	2.3%
Parents home	0	0%
Whanau	8	18.2%
Housing NZ home	1	2.3%
With partner/spouse	2	4.5%
Friends	2	4.5%
My house	19	43.2%
Other	9	20.5%

This graph can be seen to compare and contrast where young people stayed on one night and where they usually sleep. Here you can see that there is a decrease from 27.3% of youth who stayed at whanau homes the night before we spoke with them opposed to the 18.2% of young people who usually stay with whanau. There is also seen to be a decline in the number of young people who usually sleep at their friends (4.5%) opposed to where they slept the night before (13.6%). As evident here, 20.5% usually sleep somewhere not listed above. In our discussions with young people who participated in our survey a large number of this group that ticked the other box stated that they usually sleep on friends couches, in friends sheds, rough and other unsafe, unstable, or further deprived sleeping environment.

“Youth bring with them their history of incredible resilience in amongst astounding adversity”

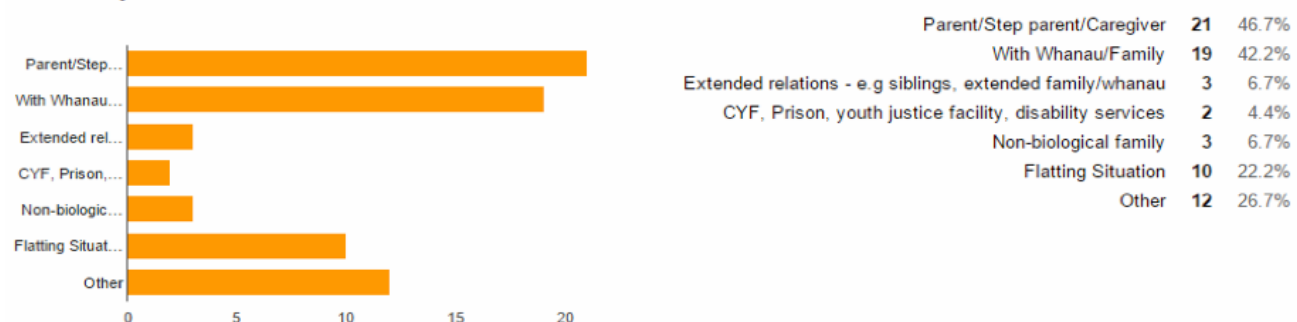
(Laurel Melbourne START)

Why are you currently in this situation?



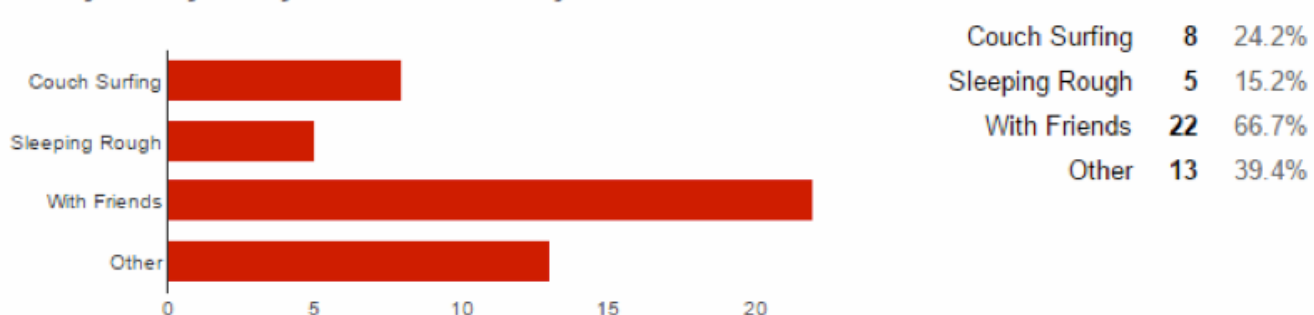
A significant determinant of housing deprivation for young people in Palmerston North is overcrowding. Of the 45 respondents to the survey, 32.5% are facing housing deprivation due to overcrowding. The second highest cause of housing deprivation among respondents has resulted from whanau problems at 30%. A breakdown in relationships with family members (either immediate or extended) can be linked to the 'Social Service Perspectives on Housing Deprivation in Palmerston North' interviews conducted with social service providers who identified breakdowns with the whanau as a risk to young people and housing. This result may also be linked with the 22.5% of young people who were asked to leave home. Evidence occurred of overlapping determinants of housing deprivation. 12.5% of participants stated that abuse and/or family violence was a cause of their current living situation. These types of issues have been found to increase the risk for young people of experiencing housing deprivation.

Where did you use to live?



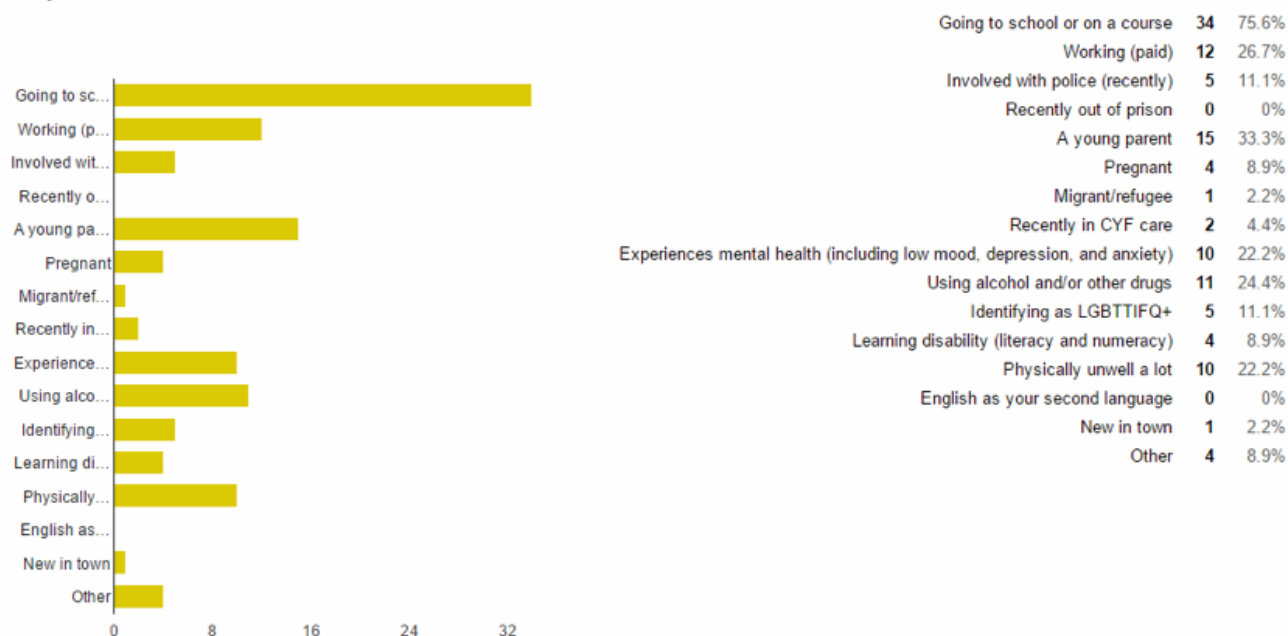
NB: Given extended time frames we would have liked to have interviewed more young people exiting state care, and more young people exiting a Youth Justice facility or prison. The acknowledgement of the constraints of the research time frame and the impact on the fullness of the research will be discussed later in this document under 'Recommendations for Further Investigation'.

Have you stayed anywhere else recently?



The transience of young people within Palmerston North is demonstrated here with 24.2% of young people couch surfing in recent times and 66.7% of young people staying with friends. 39.4% of young people reported other places they have stayed recently and many within this category simply stated that there was nowhere else they had stayed recently, meaning where they stayed the night before they participated in their survey or where they usually sleep was not an ever changing environment, or that the question had been interpreted to include having somewhere stable to live, but choosing to occasionally stay with friends. However 15.2% of our respondents reported sleeping rough recently which is fully inclusive of sleeping on the streets, in cars, sheds, and in some cases a strangers home.

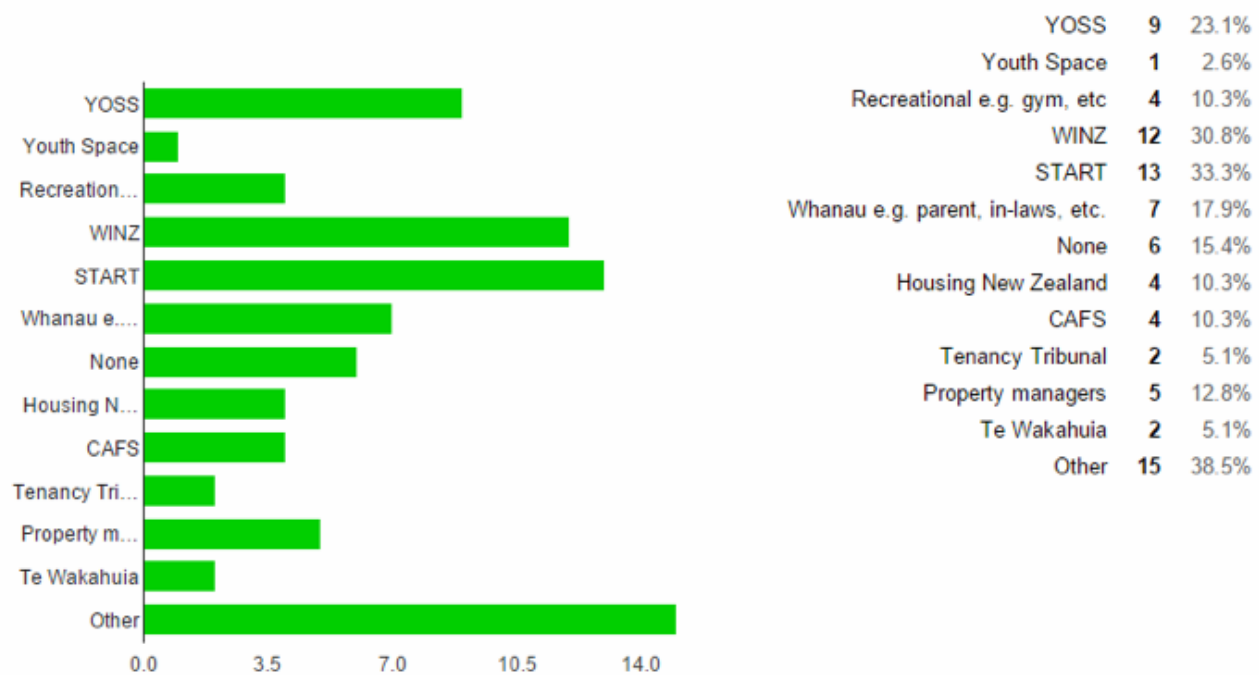
Are you:



This graph is representative of the number of young participants who completed the 'Young People who are Experiencing Difficulty with their Housing and not in Supported Stable Accommodation' survey though our meetings within Alternative Education programmes. It is however evident that young people facing housing deprivation (in its varying forms) struggle with positive education outcomes when housing insecurity is a contributing risk factor. Although the majority of young people are doing well and are thriving within the various systems, there is a small but significant number who are not. These young people are represented here. 22.2% of the young people we met with are facing some form of mental health issue ranging along a full spectrum of mental health issues. 24.4% are using alcohol or other drugs which may be interrelated to overlapping forms of deprivation (including housing), mental health and wellbeing issues (including the 22.2% of participants that claimed to be physically unwell a lot).

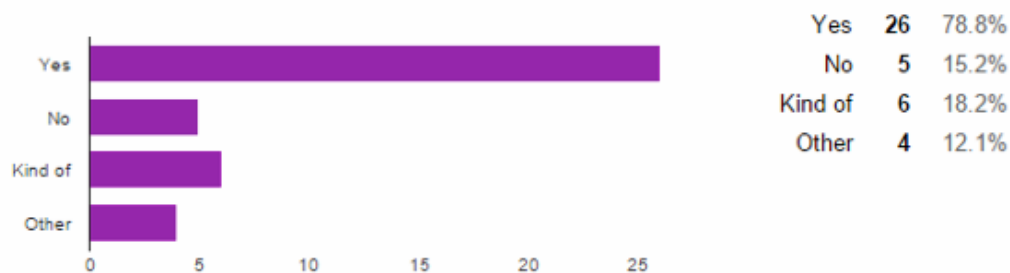


What kinds of services have you received



This graph is illustrative of the kinds of services available to young people within Palmerston North and on a national level with 33.3% and 30.8% of our participants who have actively sought help from START and WINZ for financial support. It is also evident here that the Youth One Stop Shop (YOSS) are a significant port of call for young people to address their wellbeing needs. Other types of support included: Alternative education providers, YMCA, friends and extended family, recreational services, drug and alcohol services, hospital.

Were they helpful or not helpful?



The majority of respondents stated that the services they received from services was helpful. It is important to acknowledge that this number is reflective significantly of the services young people sought such as YOSS or the alternative education providers/social service that they were currently engaged with. Any issues that young people found with these services were as a result of perceived lack of resources and time to address their issues. Anecdotal data regarding the help from additional services was significantly varied from this statistical representation. When questioned as to the services young people received from government departments or agencies with contracted government services, most young people had experiences of not being listened to or supported, of being made to feel insignificant or a burden, of not understanding all the the processes they were expected to follow, of the stress of having to be reassessed at each service, of having to 'retell' their story and not having their issues approached in a holistic way.

Anecdotal Data: Youth Survey Participants

Benefits

1. When speaking with young people surrounding housing needs and deprivation, many young people spoke to the issue of feeling like the beneficiary system saw them as dishonest *“Even when you’ve told the truth you are accused of lying and turned away”*.
2. This has been identified by young people as a key issue in the system through the way in which they see the system; *“The system is made for people to lie to get what they need and require”*. Thus they feel as though *“The good people miss out”*.
3. Young people also indicated the necessity in their situations to be on some form of benefit however, many also stated *“I wish I didn’t have to depend on a benefit”*, This may be due to a high correlation of young people identifying *“Payment cards [being] embarrassing”* and *“you get categorised – not good for everyone”*.
4. Young people feel as though they have been *“made to feel terrible for being in the situation [they] are in”* and the attitudes they feel towards themselves such as *“you wouldn’t be living right now if it weren’t for us. I don’t like the way they treat you”*.

Services

1. Many of the young people we spoke with identified a lack of knowledge of the services within the community *“Support services need to be more advertised. So many teens have no idea what is out there”*.
2. Many young people have also identified that they did have good experiences with different support services due to the case workers, social workers, professional practitioners, etc., that they dealt with but *“when she [practitioner] left the service was not good”*.
3. It has been identified by young people that *“it is really hard to ask for help when I need it”* and that service delivery is fundamental to whether they engage with the service or other services in the future through the *“different structures of help between differing services”*
4. Young people identified that many social services are overloaded with the need in the community and that they have to *“wait for ages”* to get an appointment. This can be seen to be associated with the underfunding and lack of resources for community health and wellbeing services.
5. Young people have also discussed not having a registered GP due to it financially costing them too much so they *“will go to the hospital if I am dying”*.

Discrimination

1. Discrimination in many varying forms has been identified as an issue for young people requiring support around housing *“People treating me like a child when I am not a child”* and *“age discrimination when at [property] viewings, wouldn’t give me forms to apply for houses”*.
2. Some of the young people we spoke with are young parents and have had to face the *“stereotypes of being a young mother”*
3. Some young people also identified facing many forms of discrimination at once *“Searched housing but declined because of my age – Straight up NO because I was a young mum and ‘must have guys around, must do drugs because I’m Maori”*. This form of discrimination has led to many young people couch surfing, sleeping rough, and having unstable accommodation.

Housing

1. Young people have identified a correlation to finding housing and employment *“Housing is much like jobs, you need references and experience”*
2. It has also been identified that young people in these housing situations have difficulty with one young person stating from their experience of housing needs *“Even knowing what to do wasn’t easy”*.
3. Some young people who are young parents have identified that the reasons for leaving home is due to feeling a need to *“[leave] environments we didn’t want our children to live in”* and state that due to *“Student’s [ruining] housing opportunities for us”* that *“people have the idea that all young people are irresponsible”*.
4. The young people that we spoke to also established and identified the need for some form of housing for young people through the way in which many were able to identify other friends having housing needs, deprivation, and rough sleeping difficulties, *“I have three friends currently couch surfing”*.



Gayle Moana Johnson 2013

“Housing is a fundamental source of security, it is nearly impossible to build the rest of your life without it” (Iain Lees-Galloway - MP for Palmerston North)

Housing Advice Centre –

(Statistics and Percentages of Age Groups Utilising the Service)

	Oct '14	Nov '14	Dec '14	Jan '15	Feb '15	March '15	April '15	May '15	June '15	July '15	Aug '15	Sep '15	Oct '15
Under 20 (individuals)	10	2	1	12	6	12	3	5	4	7	6	5	3
Percentage of under 20 year olds	8%	1.9%	1.9%	6.8%	3.5%	7.5%	2.3%	1.8%	2.4%	4%	3.5%	2.7%	2%
20 – 30 (individuals)	37	30	29	63	43	48	19	54	39	55	42	48	25
Percentage of 20-30yr olds	29.8%	28.8%	35.3%	36%	22.9%	30%	14.6%	20.2%	23.6%	31.4%	25.1%	26.5%	17.1%
Total number of people who sought the service	124	104	82	175	187	160	130	267	165	175	167	181	146
Percentage of total under 20yr olds and 20-30yr	37.8%	30.7%	37.2%	42.8%	26.4%	37.5%	16.9%	22%	26%	34.4%	28.6%	29.2%	19.1%

Housing Advice Centre

Report on Service Provision

The Housing Advice Centre offers services to individuals who require support with their housing needs. Support that they provide includes: housing lists (which are updated twice a week and sent to 57 local organisations), support for landlords and tenants with tenancy issues, and newspaper, phone, or internet connection in order for people (who don't have access to these) to get in contact with housing providers such as Housing New Zealand, emergency accommodation, property managers, and other services surrounding housing. The Housing Advice Centre has identified unstable housing as a main issue that people engage with their service and more than any other reason.

The Housing Advice Centre has also identified a key impact on an important demographic in Palmerston North and in wider society, this being children. It has been recognised that children are impacted by the continuous move from home to home. This can be seen through the social development and educational outcomes for children.

The statistics that the Housing Advice Centre collects shows the age groups that engage with their service and the young people demographic that has been identified in our research and fits into two of the age groups they collect statistics on. As provided above, under 20 year olds are a small (but significant) percentage of individuals who require housing support and the 20-30 year age group has also been identified by the Housing Advice Centre as the biggest demographic of individuals that utilise their service.

The main issues facing these two age groups as identified by The Housing Advice Centre is age, financial support, legislation around Tenancy Agreements, lack of resources/funding, internet access to apply online for housing. The Housing Advice Centre has also identified social workers using their service to ask legal advice about Tenancy Agreements. They also stated that the Housing Advice Centre gives information around Guarantors who can sign Tenancy Agreements on behalf or with the young person. It has also been emphasised that many people are so desperate to get into housing that they are not aware of what they are signing which can lead to unwanted issues when they wish to move.

Another key demographic within these age groups are students. The Housing Advice Centre has noticed an influx of students in November and February of each year with the main focus being on students leaving flats, problems with being released from flats, and Fixed Term Agreements.

The Housing Advice Centre states that their main role in their service is giving information to people in order for people to help themselves, *"there's a big gap between what I can give them and what they need"*. This statement can also be inter-related to the barriers that young people experience to attaining adequate housing, particularly financial issues: *"I see people living on the streets who have no money... a newspaper costs \$1.60... a shower costs \$2.00". How are people meant to be able to access the basic necessities when they cannot afford a newspaper to find housing, or have access to a shower when they have no money? "A lot of young people don't have any money, money is a barrier that stops people accessing something that is safe". If Palmerston North were to have a form of emergency accommodation "it should not be long term, most people don't want to be homeless, and living in a long-term shelter is still a form of homelessness"*.

The Impacts of Housing Deprivation on Young People

Using Sir Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha Health and Wellbeing Model



Durie, M. (1994). *Whaiora: Maori Health Development*. Auckland: Oxford University Press

Recommendations

1. Establish a Unified Framework for Young People with Housing Needs

“One size fits all” is not going to work for everyone, which is why a framework addressing youth housing needs is required, with differing levels of support for young individuals within a youth development framework that recognises the value of young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2. Governmental Funding Changes Required

Governmental funding changes are required in order to establish community togetherness and collaboration within various community agencies and organisations to work towards a common goal. Community organisations are working in contract compliant silos which have been seen to impact on individual's needs and experiences within the social sector. It is vital to address the extent to which services are or can work collaboratively, to provide a holistic model of care and support to a young person, and within a timeframe where the young person is still open to receiving the support and help they have approached an organisation or agency for. It is of key importance to address the age of discharge of young people in Aotearoa New Zealand from state care. It is imperative that the age of discharge be raised from 17 years old to the age of 21 years old.

3. Social Services Collaboration

Collaboration is needed in order to fulfil the needs of young people requiring the support of social services, schools, Rangitane as mana whenua, and Iwi. Collaboration is needed to provide a wraparound service to young individuals who require housing but also the support required for the underlying issues predisposing housing deprivation. The Vulnerable Children's Act (2014) has identified the need for collaboration through the way in which it is stated that the responsibility of protecting children and young people does not lie with one single government agency and acknowledges the need to share services and information. Through collaborating and sharing of services surrounding a child and/or young person a child centred approach would be utilised.

4. Establish an Emergency 24 hour Shelter for Young People – A Wraparound Service

Establish an emergency 24 hour shelter for young people with social work support, and wrap around support from a collaborative approach of community organisations. Conclusive from our research, a recommendation that we have is that an emergency shelter for young people is needed in Palmerston North. Due to the varying criteria of other emergency accommodation in the city it has become apparent that there is a gap in the homelessness area for young people. Although ethically we could only collect data from young people over the age of 16, it was recognised from the data we collected, that some of these young people needed emergency accommodation from a younger age.

If a form of emergency accommodation for young people was introduced into Palmerston North, an ideal emergency accommodation for these young people would include support and advocacy from a social worker and a youth worker. This type of support would connect young people with services that can provide them with holistic and supportive care, for the range of needs these young people have identified there is a requirement.

From meeting with various accommodation services in the social sector it has also come to our attention that for young people to thrive is not just to survive. Accommodation is not the only need facing youth and homelessness. From meeting and discussing the various forms of housing needs with young people in Palmerston North, it has also been recognised that housing is the final outcome of a long list of underlying factors in a young person's life that has led them to asking for help with accommodation. These underlying factors have concluded a wide range of issues ranging from overcrowding (being a leading cause in our data collection to housing deprivation), financial situations, breakdowns within

whanau, mental health and wellbeing issues, and abuse in its varying forms.

It is recommended that an emergency house of 5 to 6 bedrooms is needed to begin to address the housing needs of young people in the city. This would include staff who would pass on intergenerational knowledge of life skills and values critical to maintaining wellbeing, developmental process to prepare young people for adulthood and responsibility. Although it has been evident in our discussions that social services are contract compliant which have led to many services in the social sector working in silos; within this recommendation of accommodation a systematic approach to welfare and wellbeing is through collaboration with multiple social services to provide wraparound care. The services recommended to provide collaborative wraparound care would ideally include access to services that provide family mediation which can be an effective tool to reducing youth homelessness, mediation, advocacy, accommodation, advice, medical care, mental health and wellbeing services, beneficiary services, education, and employment support.

It is also recommended that this emergency accommodation could act as a central port of call for young people who have housing needs that may not require emergency housing but advice on where to go and ask for support with the various areas of need for young people and their housing needs along with the underlying needs relating to and predisposing to housing needs.

It is further recommended that by utilising the pre-existing HEADSS Assessment tool for each individual that accesses the emergency accommodation, a holistic approach to care can begin from the first meeting. HEADSS Assessment is a assessment document that practitioners can follow when assessing clients. The range of areas in a person's life that may have both positive protective factors and risk factors are assessed using this psychosocial process which includes Home, Education/Employment, Activities (peer group), Drugs, Sexuality, Suicide/Depression, Safety, and Spirituality (Goldenring and Rosen, 2004). HEADSS Assessments give the opportunity for the young person and the practitioner to identify areas of strength (protective factors) and areas that may have a negative impact on the wellbeing of the young person (risk factors).

5. Establish Transitional Accommodation for Young People – A Wraparound Service

Following on from the first recommendation; a further recommendation is the need for transitional housing for young people who need housing in a semi-independent environment.

The transitional house would be for young people who require some support to live independently in an environment that allows them to develop their life skills and begin to transition into full independence. It is recommended that within this transitional house there would be support for young people through the tenancy process. The emergency shelter would act as a port of call for the young people in the transitional house to go to for advice, support and help if they need it. This transitional house would act as a tool for young people to transition to full independence through the semi supported nature of learning about responsibility in living environments.

Within this recommendation it is suggested that a guide similar to that of the '*Passport to Independence*' written by Linda Oatley-Watkins, be established as a how to manual of housing, and acquiring the suitable support a young person may need as an aside to housing. Within the how to guide, required areas of interest for young people transitioning to independence are: information such as budgeting skills, benefit advice, how to acquire power, internet, etc., how to pay bills for these things, what different Tenancy Agreements look like and how different contracts may suit differing circumstances, how to work household items, where to hire household appliances and furnishings, how to go about beginning the process of becoming a licenced driver, etc. This resource would ideally be online, that could be added to and updated with current information.

It may also be of benefit to have information available to young people utilising the transitional accommodation, such as volunteering in the community, in order to get a taste of different areas of

possible careers and employment, being able to acquire new skill sets and attain referees and add to their Curriculum Vitae. Along with utilising services within the community such as volunteering, it may also be of benefit to young people to provide information on community events, activities, clubs, etc. Hobbies are useful protective factors through the way in which they connect people with others who have similar interests, and with the wider community e.g. sports teams, creative studios, gyms, specific to interest clubs, etc.

6. Re-Establishing Relationships

A further recommendation is the re-establishment of healthy, supportive and positive relationships with parents, whanau and support networks where a breakdown in the relationship may have occurred. We recommend the re-establishment of relationships due to the findings in our data that suggest a high number of young people facing housing deprivation is as a consequence of a breakdown in the whanau. If relationships can be re-established in a way that is holistically safe, healthy, empowering and mana enhancing for all parties involved we recommend this as crucial to any initiative addressing housing for young people, as healthy relationships have been found to be positive protective factors in young people's lives.

We recommend the use of the Whanau Hui approach which reconnects the young person within their Whanau, Hapu, and Iwi. It is proven that when an individual is able to identify within their culture and have a strong cultural identity it provides them with a sense of belonging which influences positive mental health and wellbeing. Whanau, Hapu, and Iwi identify their young people as taonga, taonga is, or should be, protected. If the re-establishment of this way of thinking within the relationship is possible, it further establishes a sense of belonging, respect and appreciation that a young person may feel within their Whanau, Hapu, and Iwi, and within a home or place of belonging. This correlates with our findings through the way in which some young people have never felt a positive feeling towards the idea of 'home' and thus a place of belonging.

This recommendation is based upon the feelings an individual has of home, relationships and belonging. A cultural mentor is required for this recommendation, because holistically it tends to be the cultural wellbeing of the young person that is suffering. If we look at Mason Durie's model of Te Whare Tapa Wha it is seen that when there is breakdown in one part of a person's wellbeing it causes an imbalance which then causes repercussions on the other areas of wellbeing. The Whanau Hui begins the process of getting the young person back in touch with their culture, re-establishment of healthy relationships, which then has positive influences on their holistic wellbeing.

7. Establish Accessible Housing for Young People who Seek to Live Independently

It is recommended that more accessible housing for young people who are wanting to live independently within the community is available for the age group of young people who are unable to sign Tenancy Agreements. The young people and social services we have spoken with have identified young people's needs for working for self-determination, self-respect and equal opportunities within the housing sectors of Palmerston North.

Throughout our discussions and data collection with young people it has become evident that a number of young people under the age of 18 have a level of maturity surrounding their individual life stages when they have reached a point in their life where living independently is something that they feel will work for them. This is also interconnected with the discharge age of young people in state care, whereby at 17 they become discharged from the Child, Youth, and Family (CYF), are unable to stay living with their CYF placement, and thus are still unable to sign a Tenancy Agreement unless ratified in court.

This recommendation is made hesitantly as it may not apply to all young people under the age of 18 due to differing life developmental stages, however there are also young people under the age of 25 that are struggling to find suitable housing within the city of Palmerston North due to age and other various

reasons. Age is a major factor when it comes to the housing needs of young people due to the turnover of students in Palmerston North.

It is recommended that housing is more accessible to young people who are wanting and requiring higher quality homes than those of student flats. The prices of student rentals opposed to family rentals differ greatly due to the way in which many student flats are charged by room rather than by individual house. If a young parent is looking to rent a family home but due to their age they may only be offered student rentals or other housing in the same or similar price range.

A further recommendation within this, is that of housing standards. Housing standards vary greatly within Aotearoa New Zealand and very much so in Palmerston North, whereby individuals are facing signing Tenancy Agreements on rental houses which lack insulation may not be apparent at the viewing or at all until the time comes when an individual is living within the home.

What became apparent throughout the duration of the study, is that homelessness (particularly for young people) is an outcome of many varied influences, and is often inaccurately portrayed to be a personal choice by those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

We would like to acknowledge that, while many young people in Palmerston North are succeeding within the current educational, social, economic, political cultural structures, there is a small but significant number of young people who are not thriving, and who are struggling daily to meet their basic needs inside of a large infrastructure that is failing them. It is these young people who believe that the 'systems' are working against them. The small number of young people that we had the privilege of speaking with is only representative of a larger problem. It is these young people, with their resilience and strength, who have experienced overlapping forms of discrimination, marginalisation and hardship that has resulted in not only housing insecurity, but a future of insecurity, insecurity of education, employment, income, health and wellbeing.

It is recommended that for a young person moving into independence within the community that they have someone to be accountable to such as the social worker who they may have formed a relationship with throughout their journey to independence. Often young people facing housing needs do not have a stable relationship with their parents, whanau, and other parent figures that would otherwise provide this accountability, availability, and continuity. To have someone such as a social worker check in with the young person to see how they are doing on a weekly basis to begin with and gradually decrease this will provide young people with a sense of stability and someone to go to for help and support when needed.

It is also recommended that there is a need for a Friendly Landlord structure scheme within the city, where a list of landlords that are willing to support the young population (that Palmerston North is so well known for) is set up. This would mean that young people have easier access to housing that is safe from age and situational discrimination. This would help address the transience and instability young people in the city face due the housing needs and deprivation they are facing.

8. Establishment of an Advisory Group for Young People

We advocate the establishment of an 'Advisory Group' (using the conceptual framework discussed by Joanne Voice of the Open Home Foundation, at the Palmy Youth Network) where relevant professional representatives of agencies, for example: the services of health, mental health, housing, justice, education, alcohol and drug addiction, the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Internal Affairs will meet with young people and their advocates to provide regular advice, support, services and information.

It has been envisioned by Joanne Voice that through this Advisory Group, the issues and needs surrounding a young person who may be facing housing needs can be addressed, by way of different service providers within the advisory group being available to offer their services if their organisation fits the criteria of a young person's needs. This Advisory Panel is envisioned to meet the immediate needs of a young person and address their situation. It is designed to address what young people have identified as the struggle they experience during the process of referral out, the ever drifting between organisations, and the re-assessments with services, where the young person has to retell "*their story*" time and time again.

Through having relevant professionals (representatives of agencies from the multitude of differing areas the social sector provides support for), it would allow young people, who may present with housing needs, to address the issues, needs and areas they may require support in. Joanne Voice has also emphasised that it would be extremely naïve to provide housing to, or re-home young people without walking alongside a young person to address the issues that saw them become homeless in the first instance. As previously discussed within this report, young people may present with housing needs but more often than not there is a multitude of underlying and predisposing factors that led to this point for a young person.

The premise of forming this Resource Panel or Advisory Group has identified a key validation of saving young people the time and energy of trying to find an organisation that fits the criteria of their individual needs. This is conceivable through the way in which the Advisory Group would allow for short bursts of energy on behalf of the young person to achieve a lot of the administrative process involved in accessing and assessing young people in community organisations. Through this process it would also generate one place for all the significant information regarding the young person's situation to be collected, which again would save time for the young person but also the resources within community sectors by achieving the same goal from multiple organisations in one meeting. Joanne Voice has also identified that by establishing a Resource Panel or Advisory Group, the generation of accountability between professionals and organisations may prevent [in some way] young people "*falling through the cracks*" in the social sector. The progressive impacts for the Social Sector [from establishing a Resource Panel or Advisory Group] is that it would generate the identification of gaps in service provision and may inform service development concepts that could benefit the users of social services and organisations within the city.

Positive Outcomes of Addressing Unstable Housing for Young People

1. The possible benefits of Palmerston North addressing the housing needs of young people within the City is that of a preventative move which could prevent the future over-use of resources.
2. Our recommendations are mainly focussed on preventative action rather than reactive action. By using preventative actions toward housing needs for young people in Palmerston North, it is suggested that young people may step forward and get the support required before the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff is required (this being the emergency shelter recommendation). It is also suggested that young people will not drift between services that they are referred to in order for their housing needs to be addressed so frequently as they do currently, which would save resources and waiting lists.
3. It is also possible that the frameworks recommended may be of use in order to identify the immediate needs of young people and the wraparound services they may need to thrive not just survive. One social service agency representative identified the way in which the young people within Palmerston North that are facing housing deprivation "*are the ones who are over-represented in crime, mental illness, and drug and alcohol abuse*". If Palmerston North begins addressing the housing needs of young people, these statistics may drop and therefore resources spent on these areas for this demographic may decline.

Four Identified Areas of Growing Housing for Young People

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Supported Accommodation Housing Model for Young People



Crisis/Emergency Youth Shelter/Supported Living

5-6 BEDROOM HOUSE

ALWAYS 1 BEDROOM AS A CRISIS ROOM

1-3 MONTHS STAY

1-3 NIGHT CRISIS STAY

ADVOCACY BY SOCIAL WORKER AND YOUTH WORKER

STAFFED 24/7 BY SUPPORT STAFF

RESPIRE STAYS

RISK ASSESSMENT

HOUSE LAYOUT TO ENABLE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF NEED

CONNECT YOUNG PERSON BACK WITH WHANAU

CONNECT WITH START

YOUTH PAYMENT GOES DIRECTLY TO THE SERVICE TO HELP FUND THE COSTS

LOCATED AWAY FROM AT RISK AREAS, AND CLOSE TO LOCAL TRANSPORT

TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

HANDBOOK GUIDE TO LIVING

HEADSS ASSESSMENT

CONNECTING TO SOCIAL SERVICES



Independent/Transitional Supported Living

5-6 BEDROOM HOUSE

UNSUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION WITH A SOCIAL WORKER TO DROP IN FOR A WEEKLY CHECK IN

SOME ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

MAKING SURE YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW WHO TO ASK AND WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING CAN CALL THE EMERGENCY SHELTER ANY TIME 24/7

ENGAGE YOUNG PERSON WITH THE COMMUNITY THROUGH VOLUNTEERING, SPORTS & RECREATION/CLUBS

ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND/OR TRAINING



Complete Independence in the Community

ADVOCACY FOR YOUNG PERSON SIGNING TENANCY AGREEMENTS

THE YOUNG PERSON WILL KNOW WHERE TO GO TO FOR SUPPORT – HEALTH, WELLBEING, FINANCIAL, AND HOUSING SUPPORT IF NEEDED

ACCOUNTABILITY - SOCIAL WORKER TO CHECK IN ONCE A WEEK TO BEGIN WITH AND THEN GRADUALLY DECREASE THESE TO MONTHLY

HAVE FINANCIAL SITUATION UNDER CONTROL WHETHER THAT BE THROUGH A YOUNG PERSON/PARENT PAYMENT STUDYLINK LIVING COSTS, OR EMPLOYMENT

Re-Establishing Relationships

Re-establishing relationships can be an all-encompassing tool within the three stairs of the model

Advocacy

Empowering young people to be self-advocates

Counselling

Support for re-establishing relationships

Creating a safe space for the young person to go through this process at their own pace

Recommendations for Further Investigation

The scope of our study was restricted by the 480 hours of our social work placement for Massey University with the Palmerston North Community Services Council (PNCSC). We would like to acknowledge some of the areas that would have had significant input to the outcomes of the study, that we were unable to contact due to time constraints. These areas would need to be addressed for a full account of the issue; by utilising the experiences and expertise in these domains given an expanded time frame.

Who is Missing:

- Rangitane as Mana Whenua
- High schools in Palmerston North (Awatapu College, Freyberg High School, Palmerston North Boys High School, Palmerston North Girls High School, St. Peters High School, Queen Elizabeth College).
- LGBPTTQQIIAA+ communities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Intergender, Asexual, Ally)
- Representatives of the Pasifika community (social services)
- Ethnic minorities (young people survey participants)
- Disabled Services (in particular Idea Services)
- Representatives of the Deaf Community (social service and young people survey participants)
- Youth Offenders
- Central PHO (Central Primary Health Organisation)
- MidCentral DHB (District Health Board)
- New Zealand Defence Forces
- Other Tertiary Providers (in particular UCOL)
- Other alternative Education Providers
- Highbury Whanau Centre
- Legacy Church
- Gateway Church

“We need to be encouraging destiny focused thinking for our Rangatahi” (Tessa Harrison Whakapai Hauora)

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Gayle Moana Johnson 2013

Appendix One

Glossary of Abbreviations

CCC	Christian Community Church
CYFS	Child, Youth and Family Services
DHB	District Health Board
DIA	Department of Internal Affairs
HIF	Housing Innovation Fund
HNZC	Housing New Zealand Corporation
MAIN	Manawatu Abuse Intervention Network
MBIE	Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
MUSA	Massey University Students Association
NZCEH	New Zealand Coalition to End Homelessness
PARS	Prisoner's Aid & Rehabilitation Society
PNCC	Palmerston North City Council
PNCSC	Palmerston North Community Services Council
UNCROC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VRC	Volunteer Resource Centre
YOSS	Youth One Stop Shop

Appendix Two

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YOUTH EMERGENCY HOUSING PROJECT

VISION

To offer our youth a place of belonging and hope for a future of promise and possibility.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

To study the feasibility of establishing transitional supervised emergency accommodation for youth in partnership with local social service providers.

PURPOSE

A youth emergency housing research proposal:

- To identify emergency housing **needs** for youth in Palmerston North and the **barriers** to accessing adequate social housing.
- By meeting with Palmerston North youth, community groups, service providers and local council; analysing current research, to recognise what **services** are already being provided and where the **gaps** are for youth.
- Determine to what extent the current housing **issues** for youth impact on agency service provision and **wellbeing** outcomes for youth.
- Establish potential **positive outcomes** to current service provision through information gathered from youth and professionals who work with youth directly.

Please feel free to contact us via email: Amy Viles: amylouisethompson@gmail.com
Liv Douglas: liv_douglas@hotmail.co.uk

Massey University Bachelor of Social Work 3rd year students placement with Palmerston North Community Services Council.

Appendix Three

Housing for Young People in Palmerston North Social Services Questionnaire Form

1. Can you tell us a bit about your organisation?

Can you tell us a bit about your organisation as it relates or does not relate to youth?

How many youth does your agency provide support to?

Why is housing important and how does it link in with the holistic wellbeing of an individual?

What is the main reason your agency may come into contact with youth?

How long can someone stay in your service?

What happens when they leave?

Do they have housing set up for when they leave?

2. Issues

What are the barriers to youth and emergency accommodation?

What are the issues for youth?

How common do you think the need for emergency housing for youth is?

What age group of youth do you think need services providing emergency and/or different housing services such as wrap around, long term, etc.?

3. Impact

What is the impact on a youth's wellbeing with the current housing issue?

To what extent do the current housing issues impact on youth?

To what extent do the current housing issues impact on the agencies abilities to provide the services? (Service provision)

4. What is currently in place?

What is already being done or not done for youth to meet their housing needs within your agency?

What is already being done or not done for youth to meet their housing needs locally?

What is already being done or not done for youth to meet their housing needs nationally?

5. Possible outcomes

Do you think there needs to be improvements to current structures or solutions to change current structures in order to combat youth homelessness?

Have you (within the context of your agency) got any ideas for solutions for youth homelessness?

Have you (within the context of your agency) got any ideas of the possible outcomes for youth homelessness?

Do you think eliminating youth homelessness is feasible and/or possible within Palmerston North?

Appendix Four

Survey For Young People

Who are Experiencing Difficulty with their Housing and not in Supported Stable Accommodation

Gender:

Age:

Ethnicity:

Where did you sleep last night?

Where do you usually sleep?

How long have you been in this situation?

- o Days
- o Weeks
- o Months

Why are you currently in this situation?

- o Asked to leave home
- o Relationship problems
- o Whanau problems
- o Financial situation
- o Changes in study and/or employment
- o Overcrowding
- o Abuse/family violence
- o Discharge from state care – CYF, Youth Justice Facility, Prison
- o Other

Where did you use to live?

- o Parent/step parent/caregiver
- o With whanau/family
- o Extended relations– e.g. siblings, extended family/whanau
- o CYF, Prison, youth justice facility, disability services
- o Non-biological family
- o Flatting situation
- o Other

Have you stayed anywhere else recently?

- o Couch surfing
- o Sleeping rough
- o With friends
- o Other

Are you:

- o Going to school or on a course?
- o Working (paid)?
- o Involved with police (recently)
- o Recently out of prison?
- o A young parent?
- o Pregnant?
- o Migrant/refugee?
- o Recently in CYF care?
- o Experiencing mental health (including low mood, depression, and anxiety)?
- o Using alcohol and/or other drugs?
- o Identify as LGBTTIQ+?
- o Learning disability (literacy and numeracy)?
- o Physically unwell a lot?
- o English as your second language?
- o New in town?
- o Other?

Who do you rely on when you need help?

Who relies on you for support?

What kinds of services have you received?

- o Were they helpful?
- o Were they not helpful?
- o Kind of

Why?

What kind of help or services do you wish were there for you that are not available now?

Appendix Five

Artist Statements

Mani Kingi (Ngāti Raukawa)

Nga Whakatipuranga 2013

In my artwork I incorporated my family. The koru symbolise the generations of my grandmother, mother and myself, the inner koru represents pregnancy and still in the process of carrying an unborn child. I used women and my family to assume the role of strong women and emphasise Mana Wahine. As strong women we reflect on the idea we are not only physically present in the world but also spiritually, hence the two canvases representing a physical side and spiritual side. The flax was harvested from Whakatipuria and woven to emblemise the generations of lives connected together. I also placed the weaving around the koru patterns to symbolise the shelter, protection and support of my family.

Gayle Moana Johnson (Ngāti Tūwharetoa)

2013

The net is representing 'society', symbolising that I felt trapped and labelled. Here I have used the outline of a rainbow fish (known as a symbol of my tribe Tūwharetoa) trying to chew through the net to help me.

Green with fish

Gayle Moana Johnson (Ngāti Tūwharetoa)

2013

The koru is used to represent the native bush surrounding my marae 'Papakai'. This is where is all began. The koru also represents all my whanau and friends throughout my art work showing our growth and how whanau helped us get through the negativity.

Mountain marae, koru

With Support From:

Palmerston North Community Services Council

Phone 06 354 3809

Hancock Community House, 77-85 King Street, Palmerston North

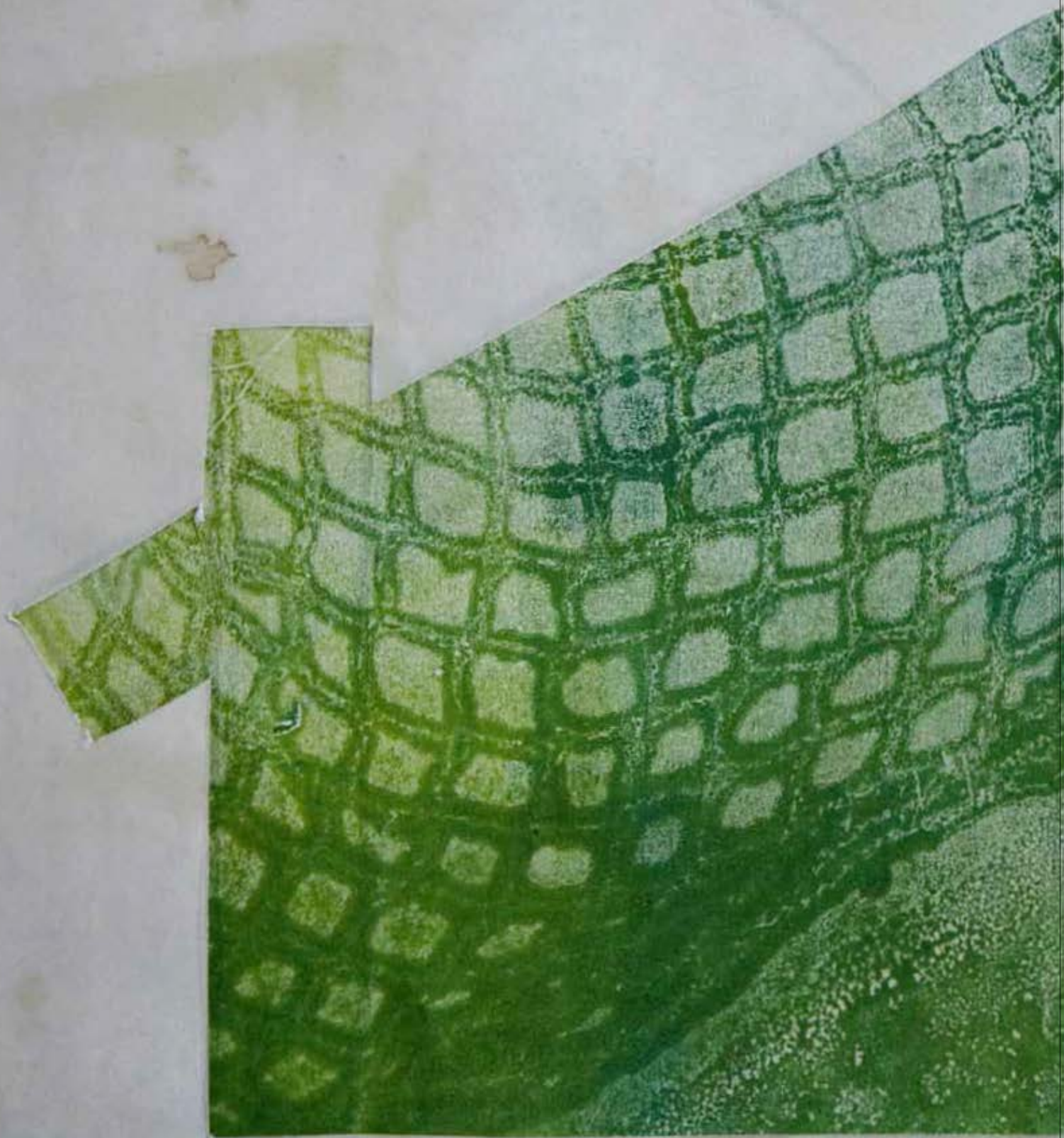
<http://www.facebook.com/pncsc>

<http://www.pncsc.co.nz>

The Palmy Youth Network

<https://www.facebook.com/PalmyYouthNetwork>

and the Massey University School of Social Work



With Support From:



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND



PALMERSTON NORTH
COMMUNITY SERVICES COUNCIL
Sharing strengths - empowering community

Young people facing housing deprivation in Palmerston North: a crisis?

Douglas, Olivia

2015-11

<http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7514>

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